

Candidate Cancels Trip To Moscow

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MIAMI BEACH, Aug. 9
—Richard M. Nixon today ruled out any pre-election trip to Moscow and accepted an invitation from President Johnson for a briefing on the Paris peace talks at the LBJ Ranch Saturday.

The newly named Republican presidential candidate told an informal press conference Mr. Johnson had phoned him last night to suggest the meeting.

Nixon said he and his running mate, Maryland Gov. Spiro T. Agnew, would stop off to see the President en route to California, where they have planned a week of campaign strategy talks.

Nixon said they would be briefed on the progress of the Vietnam negotiations by the President, Secretary of State Rusk and Cyrus Vance, Deputy U.S. negotiator at the Paris talks.

He said Mr. Johnson had made it "quite plain there had been no breakthrough" in the negotiations, but wanted Nixon and Agnew to have the latest information on the talks.

In ruling out the possibility of a visit to Moscow to meet with Soviet leaders later this month, the former Vice President overruled some of his top aides, who had been urging such a trip as a way of emphasizing his international prestige.

Nixon told reporters last Tuesday he was considering a Moscow visit, but today he said there were "too many demands on my schedule to allow for foreign travel."

"I insisted," he said, "that if I went to the Soviet Union, the trip would have to include the European capitals, London, Paris, Bonn and Rome. We must not undercut the alliance or by-pass it. There just isn't time for such a trip."

Nixon visited Russia in 1967, but was not received by the Soviet leaders, many of whom

have been critical of him ever since his famous "kitchen debate" with former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in 1959. Nixon said Tuesday he would visit Russia only if its leaders would receive him.

The news conference came after Nixon's meeting with members of the Republican National Committee, his last formal engagement before he retired to Key Biscayne, just south of here, for the first pe-nomination early yesterday morning.

In disclosing the President's
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invitation, Nixon said Mr. Johnson had phoned him last night and said, "Dick, you have my congratulations—and sympathy."

He indicated that he and the President had struck an informal agreement to keep developments in the peace negotiations from influencing the fall campaign.

Nixon said Mr. Johnson had congratulated him and the Republican Party on their handling of the Vietnam issue. Nixon said he assured the President that whatever criticisms he had of the war, "we made it very clear we would not undercut the negotiations."

In turn, the GOP nominee said he told the President "that we would have to be kept briefed on the progress of the talks so the ground would not be cut from under us."

Nixon said some Republicans had been concerned about press speculation that "on a central issue like Vietnam, the party in power could make an announcement that would make great political hay for them," without apprising the opposition of the news.

But he said the President had assured him that he wants "to play it straight down the middle and have a United Nation at home."

Mr. Johnson's statement, as reported by Nixon, appeared to rule out the possibility that Vice President Humphrey, if nominated by the Democratic

Convention for President, might some time this fall be permitted to announce a breakthrough in the Vietnam negotiations.

Nixon said tomorrow's visit to the LBJ Ranch would be his first, adding that "for personal reasons, I'm eager to see it." He recalled that Mr. Johnson had often jibed at him for refusing earlier invitations at times when Nixon said his schedule made it impossible for him to go to Texas.

The Nixon entourage will fly from Miami Saturday morning to Randolph Air Force Base near San Antonio. The two candidates and their wives will then board a helicopter for a 70-mile flight to the Ranch.

No reporters will be allowed. A statement on the meeting will be read later to White House newsmen in Austin and to the press traveling with Nixon in San Antonio.

He told reporters that while he and the President "are supposed in the columns to be almost blood-feud enemies, we do have a mutual respect" for each other. At another point, however, he recalled the "chronic campaigner" phrase Mr. Johnson had applied to him in a moment of anger in 1966. Nixon said Mr. Johnson had agreed to keep him current on the Paris talks because "not as a chronic campaigner himself, but as a fellow politician, he knew it was a fair request."

In postponing plans to visit Russia, he said a post-election trip to meet the Soviet leaders "can be considered, but it would depend on the foreign situation at that time."